tomorrow and the day after, and this has been a very harsh summer and the number of deaths, we read in the newspapers, has gone up to 2,500 or 3,000, or whatever it is. The reason is, shall I say, absent-mindedness; shall I say, heartlessness. We read that news-item and then leave it at that. Is there any attempt on the part of the Government to try to organise additional relief?

Now there is a problem of drinking water. There is a problem of exposure to heat and some shelter should be made. And there is a problem of some immediate nutrition for these people, and I do not know whether any initiative can be taken by the Central Government. There is still a full month of summer left in most parts of the country. At the Centre, whether it is the Relief Minister or the Rehabilitation Minister or somebody else,— I don't have the faintest notion—under the umbrella of the Prime Minister's Office, certainly, one can call in the concerned people and organise certain measures so that at least some of the prospective deaths can be avoided. We owe it to our nation. Thank you, Madam.

RE. INTERRUPTIONS IN POWER SUPPLY

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Madam, while associating myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government the interruptions in electric supply. It is one of the basic causes for the shortage of drinking water. There are other problems also, but the interruption in the power supply is the main one, and the interruption in power supply in the Capital of India is because of the total mismanagement of power generation in Delhi and supply of generated power in different parts of Delhi. There are a number of alarming reports that the people who have been put at the helm of affairs, so far as power generation is concerned, had not been doing their job. There is a complete mismanagement, full of corruption, a serious lack of responsibility. What is amusing is this. If the citadel of power, political power, that is, Delhi, is allowed to remain in a condition like this, in a catastrophic power condition, I would like to know what the Hon. Minister looking after the Ministry of Power is doing. Even in Parliament there is an interruption of supply. Today in the morning there was an interruption of power supply. What is the Government doing? The Government is too much preoccupied with the question of atomic explosion and experimental launching of some rockets. The country is never strong only by defence arms. The country is strong by proper management. The Government is absolutely mismanaging the elementary responsibility that the country has given to them. Therefore, I call upon you, Madam, to direct the Government to take immediate steps so that the chaos and anarchy resulting from the catastrophic power situation in the citadel of power are immediately remedied. The hon. Ministers who are performing their political responsibility in Chennai must kindly attend to their responsibilities here.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Das Gupta, the Minister is here.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Therefore, I am making this.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Das Gupta, the Minister is here. He would lie to respond.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: The hon. Minister is more interested in looking after his political responsibility in Chennai than his statutory responsibility in Delhi.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Let him respond.

डा० रणबीर सिंह (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मैडम ....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Do you want to associate yourself with this issue? Okay, please go ahead.

डा० रणबीर सिंह: मैडम, मैं आप के माध्यम से सदन के ध्यान में यह बात लाना चाहता हूं कि इस देश में शुरू से ही किसान पूरी तरह से निग्लेक्ट किया गया है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (कुमारी सरोज खापर्डे): आप किसानों के विषय पर बोल रहे हैं?

डा० रणबीर सिंह: जी, हां।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (कुमारी सरोज खापर्डे): किसान की बात हो चुकी है। अभी तो बिजली की बात चल रही है।

डा० रणबीर सिंह: मैडम, मैं माननीय सदस्य के साथ एसोसिएट करता हूं और किसानों की डिफिकल्टीज के बारे में बतलाना चाहता हूं। किसान को बिजली भी पूरी नहीं मिलती है। उस के खेत में बिजली रात को दी जाती है जबकि उसे दिखायी भी नहीं पड़ता कि उस के खेत के कितने हिस्से में पानी गया और कितने में नहीं गया। लिहाजा मैं चाहता हूं कि किसान को पूरे समय बिजली मिलनी चाहिए। इतनी नहीं तो कम-से-कम 6-8 घंटे रेगुलरली, अन-इंटरऐड सप्लाई मिलनी चाहिए।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (कुमारी सरोज खापर्डे) डा० रणबीर सिंह जी, मुझे लगता है कि मंत्री जी इस विषय में कुछ रिस्पांड करना चाहते हैं और हम लोग उन्हें सुनें तो वह ज्यादा ठीक रहेगा। Let the Minister responed.

डा० रणबीर सिंह: मैं स्वयं को माननीय सदस्य के प्रस्ताव से जोड़ना चाहता हूं।

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA (Karnataka): Madam, Karantaka is also suffering badly due to inadequacy of power.. One of the Central Ministers says, "We have a lot of power in the Central grid. Your State Government has to pay the money and take it." Our Chief Minister has gone on record saying, "We have money; we are paying; but the Centre says that there is no power in the Central grid." I want a clarification on this, whether the statement of the Central Minister is correct or the statement of the Chief Minister is correct. The Central Minister says that is the Karnataka Government pays the money, they would get ample power. The Karnataka Chief Minister says that there is no power in the Central grid, though they are asking for power. Where do we stand?

डा० (श्रीमती) उर्मिला बिमनभाई पटेल (गुजरात) मैं माननीय सदस्य के प्रस्ताव से स्वयं को एसोसिएट करते हुए कहना चाहती हूं कि गर्मी के इस मौसम में साढ़े 3 हजार लोगों की मृत्यु हो चुकी है। इस से बचाव के लिए पीने का पानी एम्पल मात्रा में मिलना बहुत जरूरी है। आप जितना पानी पिएंगे उतना ही गर्मी से बचाव कर सकते हैं।

मैडम, गुजरात में आज करीब 10 हजार गांव ऐसे है जहां कि पीने का पानी नहीं है वहां टैंकर से पानी प्रोवाइड करना जरूरी है। सरकार ने वहां 1500 गांवों को पीने का पानी देने का आयोजन किया है, लेकिन बाकी गांवों के लिए कोई प्रोवीजन नहीं है। फिर जहां प्रोवीजन है वहां भी वीक में एक दफा पानी मिलता है। मैडम, यही स्थिति राजस्थान में भी है। मैडम, मेरा कहना है कि अगर लोगों को पानी जैसी चीज नहीं मिलेगी तो वह गर्मी से बचाव कैसे करेंगे। मेरा आप के माध्यम से इस बारे में केन्द्र सरकार को अनुरोध है कि उसे अपनी ही पार्टी वाली स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स को भी कुछ शब्द लिखकर वहां पानी का प्रोविजन कराने के लिए कहना चाहिए।

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI R. KUMARAMANGALAM): Madam Chairperson, I am obliged to our senior Member who had raised this point. It is true that the power scenario in Delhi is exceptionally bad. It is also bad at the national level. It is not that there is a very credible situation at the national level. We have a serious situation at the national level. In so far as power generation capacity is concerned, we are in the region of 12,000 megawatts short. It is not that there will be a surplus at all nationally. We have improved our plant load factor substantially and that has been the saving grace. In Delhi, the situation is, distribution within Delhi has reached a stage of almost collapse. Cables are not able to take the additional load of unplanned ad hoc extensions. The theft in Delhi is to the tune of 37 per cent, as admitted by DVB. *(Interruptions)* Here more than political partronage, I think Shri Gurudas's comrades have a great hand in it, I mean the engineers, because it cannot be just political patronage. It has to be collusion, if you don't mind my saying it, between the person who steals power and the person

who supervises stealing of power. I have promised Delhi all support from the national grid because Delhi is the capital and as Shri Gurudasji said, it is the citadel of power. We have, given a very large share of 35 per cent from the Central quota in the Northern region to Delhi. We are capable of pumping into Delhi 2400 MW of power. But Delhi is unable to take anything beyond 2000 MW of power, though its requirement is 2400 MW essentially because its internal transmission and distribution is in a miserable state of affairs. It is assessed that Rs. 1,700 crores needs to be invested in Delhi merely in the distribution and transmission system to upgrade it to ensure that proper supply can be given. The day before yesterday, we had a small gale and due to this the link with the Northern grid which is there in the Delhi portion fell down. Delhi lost 800 MW of power and four generators tripped at I.P. and Rajghat. I have done my best. We have asked the power grid to take over five of the major sub-stations in Delhi. They are running round the clock. I must compliment my great engineers for the work that they have done. Not only that, we have also offered that we will replace any cable that DVB wants us to replace to help them to upgrade. In addition to that our NTPC engineers have moved in the last two days to the I.P. power station and the Rajghat power station to help DVB to get their generators working. It is not that I am sleeping in Chennai and only doing Chennai politics.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: You are having sleepless nights in Chennai.

SHRI R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Actually, I am having sleepless nights in Delhi. I am more of a Telephone Operator who picks up complaints against DESU. I don't mind it because I believe that all of us being people's representatives must do our job. But the situation really is serious. We are paying attention on a warfooting. This morning, there was another slip in the local grid. Normally, it is not supposed to be the job of the Power Minister. But I had to move very quickly to help get the things going. I can assure you that we are doing our best. There is an option that has been given about privatisation. It is being investigated. But I am a beliver that there is no panacea to all evils in one terminology. Neither nationalisation nor privatisation in one shot will solve the problem. It is basically good management and honest management. I think that is what we all need to concentrate on. I would request the Members of this House who are our seniors — as Lok Sabha Members we always look upon Rajya Sabha Members as peers — I would request the peers to give us full support and encouragement. We need a lot of support because we are dealing with the mafia element in Delhi which actually is controlling and using power as a mafia source.

So far as Karnataka is concerned, the Chief Minister of Karnataka asked for some power. I have arranged 100 MW of power and told him to pay for that. He has not paid yet. But we are giving power to Karnataka despite non-payment. But the point is Karnataka is again having this problem. Because of lack of shunt capacitators the frequency is falling in Karnataka. Frequency in Karnataka is as low as 46 cycles which means normal transformers and normal airconditioners would blow up. I do not know what the people of Karnataka are doing. If I was one of them and if I was a lawyer, I might even file a suit looking at the way everyting is going. What we have assured Karnataka is that the Power Grid will take up the job and the State has welcomed it. We are fixing shunt capacitors as the Power Grid, a Central Corporation, is moving into Karnataka. They are fixing it to push the voltage up so that the power can flow. If the voltage is at different levels, the power cannot flow because of the clash of the voltage levels. And we have to put shunt capacitors to ensure that the impedance or the reactive power is countered. I can assure my learned friend, the hon. Member, Shri Hanumanthappa, that I will pay attention to the problem. Karnataka is my neigh-

bouring State; it is not too far away from where I live. So, I will not ignore it so quickly. But I am sure that as soon as the main transmission link to Bangalore from IRMA is set up, the problem will be solved. I hope that by the next year,...*(Interruptions)*. Link takes a long time. We are talking of traversing something like 1,500 kms. of new lines. It cannot be done overnight. But we will do it to see that a permanent connection is given.

Madam, we have about 2,000 MW surplus in the North-Eastern region. For various reasons, the generation in the North-Eastern region has gone up. But we are not able to push that power to the rest of India because the national grid and the inter-state links are not complete. But it is my hope that by the turn of the century, we will be able to move it to various States. This year we have moved 2,000 MW of power amongst various regions. By next year we should be able to do 4,000 to 5,000 MWs. It is my belief that the problem can be addressed. But I would seek the co-operation of this House. The Members should feel free to tell me where there are problems and they should join me in fighting this mafia which controls the power sector. Thank you.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, a very important question arises....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): There is a Calling Attention on this subject next Thursday. At that time, you can raise all these things and the Minister will reply.... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, just a minute. The situation in Delhi appears to be much worse than what it appears to us. There is an admission of this by the Minister. We praise the Minister for making an open confession. I thank him for that.... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): He is taking you into confidence.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I thank him for that. While thanking him, I would like to know how many months it will take to put the things in order in Delhi.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): He will reply to your questions next Thursday.

Now, we have to continue the discussion on the Government Motion and Railway Budget. We shall take it up after the lunch break.

I adjourn the House for lunch till 2.10 p.m.

The House then adjourned for lunch at eight minutes past two of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at twelve minutes past two of the clock,

The Vice-Chairman, Shri John F. Fernandes, *in the Chair.*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Now, we will resume the debate on General Discussion on Railways.

I. Motion Re. Status Paper on *Railways: Some Issues and Options*

II. The Budget (Railways), 1998-99 (Contd.)

श्री वीरेन्द्र कटारिया (पंजाब): वाईस-चेयरमैन साहब, मैं आपका शुक्रिया अदा करता हूं कि आपने मुझे बोलने का मौका दिया। मैं कल कह रहा था कि रेलवे हमारी कौम की लाईफलाइन है, नेशनल इंटिग्रेशन का चिह्न है, हमारी इकॉनामी का एक बहुत बड़ा हिस्सा है और उसके साथ-साथ आम आदमी का एकमात्र ट्रांसपोर्ट का साधन भी है। रेलवे मंत्री जी ने जो बजट पेश किया है, उसका प्लान आऊटले 8,403 करोड़ रुपए से बढ़ाकर 9,500 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया है। इसके लिए वे बधाई के पात्र हैं। रेलवे बोर्ड की जो डिमांड थी वह 10 हजार करोड़ की थी। बहुत बड़ा ढांचा है रेलवे का और उसमें जितना ज्यादा से ज्यादा प्लान हो उसकी बहुत जरूरत है। जितनी डिमांड है उसके मुताबिक रिसोर्सेज सरकार या रेलवे खुद मुहैया नहीं कर पा रहा है इसलिए डिमांड